



Julia Marie Helm Hoskins

July 7, 1942 - February 25, 2016
Artist, writer, world traveler

Julie Hoskins was born in Red Willow County, Nebraska, to Paul and Alice Helm, a farmer and a school teacher. Julie completed her last two years of high school in Reedsport, Oregon, where she met her husband-to-be shortly after she graduated.

In 1962, after a year at Colorado State College, Julie married US Air Force Second Lieutenant Don Hoskins at McClellan Air Force Base in Sacramento, California. They spent the next 20 years traveling to various duty assignments. When their daughter, Angie, and son, Michael, were small, the family was posted to Izmir, Turkey, for two years, where Don was assigned to NATO. They developed a lifelong attachment to Turkey and its people.

Upon their return to the States, they lived in Mississippi, New York, and New Jersey, where Julie completed her degree in English at Rutgers University. She thoroughly enjoyed Rutgers and excelled in all of her classes. Her favorite course was an upper-division class on Irish writer James Joyce; her greatest class project was a 48-page explanation

The *Applegater* bids a fond farewell to Julie Hoskins

For more than three years, Julie Hoskins wrote book reviews for the *Applegater*. She frequently chose abstruse books to review, which pleased us and hopefully our readers, too. In Julie's honor, Joan Peterson reviews Julie's own book, *She Caves to Conquer*, and Julie's poem, *Applegate Orange*, appears below.

We reach out to Julie's family and friends with our sincerest condolences. We will miss her intelligence, her style, and her thoughtful prose.

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of seven pages from Joyce's difficult last novel, *Finnegans Wake*.

From New Jersey the Hoskins moved to Toronto, Canada, where Don attended the Canadian Forces Command and Staff College, then to Ottawa, where Julie took up macramé. The family spent many weekends in the Canadian wilderness collecting "perfect" sticks for perches for the hundreds of macramé owls that Julie made and sold in local art shops. The kids long remembered returning from those weekend outings buried beneath sticks in the back seat of a small Fiat coupe. Julie's wall hangings won prizes at several art exhibits.

The Hoskins family spent the final four years of Don's military career in Hawaii, where Julie sold real estate and served as a substitute teacher.

In 1982, after 20 years, Don retired from the US Air Force and went to work for Pacific Gas & Electric in San Francisco. They bought a home in Marin County, thinking they would stay there the rest of their lives. Julie had a great job in downtown San Francisco as secretary for the State of California Board of Pilot Commissioners. She was normally the only one in her office, and she often had time to visit her favorite art shops and stores over her lunch period.

Although the Hoskinses appreciated the San Francisco Bay Area, they decided

to search for riverfront property. Because Julie had long enjoyed the Oregon Shakespeare Festival in Ashland, they decided on 15 acres on the Applegate River. After Julie and Don retired in 1995, they designed and built their dream home on this land.

Julie now had time to immerse herself in books, art, and flowers. The house began filling with books, several thousand of which she left behind. Her iris garden grew to contain a hundred or more varieties.

With their house completed, they began to travel with at least one annual overseas trip. Julie especially loved Ireland and the many African countries they visited, but her favorite trips were to Norway, where they met and fell in love with Don's relatives.

Early in her marriage, Julie began writing down notes about experiences, stories she had heard, and articles that she found particularly interesting. Finally, in 2013, at the urging of her daughter, she put these notes together and published her book, *She Caves to Conquer*. She enjoyed giving talks about her book to various groups. Julie found another outlet for her writing and began submitting book reviews to the *Applegater*. Her reviews, frequently on esoteric books, prompted a number of readers to purchase new dictionaries.



Julie's painting, "A Raven in Boots," was influenced by Brian Doyle's book, *Mink River*.

Perhaps the best of her artwork is her final painting, a reproduction that might be called "A Raven in Boots," prompted in part by *Mink River*, written by Brian Doyle, her favorite living author. Julie and Don attended Brian's talks whenever he appeared in southern Oregon and considered themselves to be his best groupies. She also created and supplied several local shops with beautiful, unique pieces of jewelry.

Julie was preceded in death by her son, Mike, who died in 2015. Her son's death triggered a depression that she could not bear. She is survived by Don, her husband of 54 years; daughter Angie Killian, granddaughter Jessica Killian, and grandson Matt Killian of Bigfork, Montana; and her son's daughters, Isabella and Emma Lee Hoskins, of Bourbonnais, Illinois.

"Julie was vibrant and brilliant and astute and absorbed by stories and their power to bring people together... She had a smile bigger than a county, the brightest startling socks, and a wry dry sense of humor I will miss the rest of my life. The world is dimmer without her light."

—Brian Doyle, author, *Mink River*

She Caves to Conquer

Julia Helm (Hoskins)



What a generous surprise to open the mysterious cover of Julia Helm's (Julie Hoskins's) novel, *She Caves to Conquer*, and find not a book on spelunking, but a fascinating story about life in the Midwest and southern Turkey. The cover of the book is somewhat spooky: a stack of old, hardbound books cut through by an ancient cave carved out of Roman architecture. Don't let this fool you!

At the beginning of the book, character Iris Tree reveals something about the author: "I am always called to the still unknown—to the road that leads on—the stranger at the inn—the tune heard 'round the corner." This is a writer who delves into the essences of life and to the true nature of what makes us human beings.

The main character, Ardis, a woman in her late teens or early twenties, is living in southern Turkey as a tutor of English to a family of three teenage children, two girls and one boy. She is called back to her original home in Freedom County in

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the Midwest upon the death of her Aunt Cora, the woman who, along with Cora's sister, Aunt Theda, raised Ardis. As it turns out, Ardis's mother and father had died when she was a young girl, and her growing-up years were spent on the old homestead with the two aunts.

Ardis's return to Freedom County brings up memories from her childhood as she explores the homestead house that was soon to be burned to the ground. She reflects on the solace she found in books and how they influenced her as she grew into adulthood. We also learn of Ardis's first romance with a young man and their escape to the Rocky Mountains together. Julia Helm brings this affair to life with her precise language: "That night the words left the page. There were no pages."

Ardis meets a man called Osman through her work in a museum. He invites her to go to Turkey to work as a tutor for a family in Cappadocia. This begins another saga of events with the Turkish people, both in the family she works for and within the community. The bedroom that Ardis shares with the two young girls is adjacent to a mysterious cave (many of the houses in the village are built out of caves in the hillside), where rugs and other items are stored. This area remains off-base for

the young teenagers in the house, but Ardis is more than curious as to what that cave contains. Later we learn that the father of the Turkish family is a smuggler.

Details of life in the village are more than descriptive as we learn of the forced marriage of a 12-year-old girl to an older man. The author relates the screams of the girl in the night and how the groom "strutted around the *cay* house, bragging about his strength and virility." Ardis leaves Cappadocia and travels to the home village of the poet Rumi, where she observes the whirling Dervish in prayer dances. Details of the scenes are vivid and colorful.

Ardis's father died in a fire caused by her mother, who was having an affair with one of the workmen who helped on the homestead. Her mother was institutionalized, and when Ardis returns to Freedom County after her aunt's funeral, she visits her mother in Heinlitz, a small town outside her home town. Her mother barely recognizes her. Ardis is faced with the reality that there is no going back. She conquers her grief.

The novel ends with a joyful, almost accidental visit to Woodstock, where Ardis dances and sings with a new brand of people. "Ardis suddenly wants, after all

this time and more than anything, to be a part of her own place and community."

The last chapter in the novel begins with a quote from Rumi: "There is a community of the spirit. Join it, and feel the delight of walking in the noisy street, and being the noise." Julia Helm discovers this spirit of community in her novel, *She Caves to Conquer*.

Joan Peterson
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Applegate Orange

Julie Hoskins

Demand, demand, every year they come.
Tap tapping at my window now; they're back.
Sun kissed, Icteridae are here. What fun!
Like clockwork, orange, brilliant darts of black,
Orioles, a pair, peck at my glass.
They've learned I'll give them string. They make a row.
I cut and fray the line. They give no pass.
They won't forego. They want attention now!
They've learned to hang that nest so high it mocks
Marauding furry predators they foil
With nests like woven pliant swinging socks.
They know to interweave the cord, such toil.
How long—eons—for them to learn these things?
Such joy for me; I just provide the strings.